

CALEXICO

COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT REBATE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

I. INTRODUCTION

The Storefront Rebate Program is designed to stimulate building improvements and upgrade the appearance of existing commercial properties within the Calexico Downtown Design and Implementation Program areas. The façade rebates are provided in recognition of the extremely valuable impact these investments have on the effort to maintain the vitality of our commercial areas. The objective of this program is to promote joint public/private action and the investment in the areas which will complement and enhance the large scale revitalization efforts planned for the downtown areas. All façade improvements must be consistent with the design guidelines established for the Calexico Downtown Design and Implementation Program area. The administration of this program will be the responsibility of the Redevelopment Agency. The Storefront Rebate Program will initially be funded with Tax Increment Funds and subsequently by other funds when available.

These guidelines have been developed to present the basic elements of the Rebate Program with specific emphasis on the eligibility criteria for selection of applicant/area, types of improvements and reimbursable expenditures. Details of the necessary documentation for processing grants under this program are outlined in the Procedural Steps.

II. STOREFRONT REBATE PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this program, the following definitions will apply:

1. Awning Canopy - A temporary shelter, sometimes retractable, that is supported entirely from the exterior wall of a building.
2. Codes - The Building Code and Zoning Code of the City of Calexico, latest editions.
3. Design Review ARC - A committee which will be responsible for plan review of exterior improvements for consistency with established Design Guidelines.
4. Design Guidelines - Architectural design guidelines developed for rehabilitation in the Calexico Downtown Design and Implementation Program commercial revitalization area.
5. Exterior Lighting - Lighting fixtures and the installation of same, attached or connected to existing building undergoing renovation. Exterior lighting does not include free standing lighting in the public way.
6. Façade - The entire exterior front surface of an existing building from grade to the roof line. Improvements above the storefront level are only eligible when performed in conjunction with storefront improvements. Where a building abuts two streets and/or an

alley, empty lot, parking area, or open space, such building may have other faces considered façades at the discretion of the Agency. Decorative fencing and landscaping of vacant parcels adjacent will also be considered on an individual basis.

7. Landscaping - Landscaping items (e.g., trees, bushes, planter boxes), are eligible when considered integral to the façade treatment of the building. Eligibility is determined at the discretion of the Agency.
8. Final Design - Detailed drawings showing the refined Preliminary Design and revised cost estimates.
9. Passive Energy Conservation Equipment - Equipment and/or materials which by their very nature and method of use and installation improve the energy efficiency of the building. Such equipment must be part of the building and may include canopies, awning, shutters, or other shading devices, and special glazing.
10. Preliminary Design - Initial conceptual sketches of improvements based on the objectives of the owner(s).
11. Professional Fees - Those expenses not spent on the physical improvements, materials, equipment, or labor directly related to their installation. These costs include, but are not limited to: engineering fees, and legal expenses.
12. Shutter - Moveable cover or screen for a door or window to provide protection from the elements.
13. Sign - Any commercial sign attached to the building which is consistent with the City Sign Ordinance and any applicable specific plan.
14. Working Drawings and Specifications- The drawings which show detailed methods of installation and materials and the specifications there from to be followed in constructing the improvements.

III. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/AREA

A. Applicants

Owners, tenants, and lessees of commercial property are eligible to apply for assistance. Tenants and Lessees are required to provide documentation of the property owner's consent of the improvements at the time of initial application. Written consent may either be in the form of a lease indicating the lessee's responsibility for property renovation and repair or documentation of the property owner's agreement to the proposed rehabilitation.

B. Areas

Areas which are located within Callexico Downtown Design and Implementation Program areas map are eligible for assistance under this program. (See Attachment A for map of Eligible Areas.)

IV. ELIGIBLE REIMBURSABLE EXPENDITURES

Approved property owners and merchants who install improvements of storefront are eligible for a rebate of up to 50% of the costs. The agency's maximum rebate is \$10,000 per storefront for all approved improvements. (see rebate schedule on page 4).

Approved rehabilitation of upper floor façades is also eligible if first floor improvements are approved and/or performed. Professional, legal, and City permit fees may be included in the total storefront improvement costs.

Rebates will be made for improvements started and completed after the Agency's acceptance of the final plans and specifications. Receipt of the rebate is subject to an inspection by Agency staff and the submission of complete documentation of project costs, including:

- 1) the applicant's cancelled checks and bills;
- 2) copies of building permits;
- 3) all contractor's waivers of liens; and,
- 4) a photograph of the building after completion of the façade improvements.

V. ELIGIBLE TYPES OF IMPROVEMENTS

Eligible improvements may include: façade renovation; signs; doors; windows; awnings; graphics; exterior lighting improvements; landscaping; decorative fencing and landscaping of vacant parcels in connection with a façade treatment; capital improvements such as surface parking lot installation and improvements, sidewalks, lighting, curbs and gutters in conjunction with façade work; and certain types of passive energy conservation improvements. All improvements must conform with the City Building Codes and the Design Guidelines adopted for the area. Participant's proposals will be subject to design review by the Architectural Review Committee.

VI. APPEAL PROCESS

The applicant has the right to appeal the Architectural Review Committee decision to the Agency Board.

VII. REBATE SCHEDULE

Financial assistance for exterior improvements in the form of a cash rebate as follows:

<u>Cost of improvements</u>	<u>Amount of Rebate</u>
\$ 1,000	\$ 500
2,000	1,000
3,000	1,500
4,000	2,000
5,000	2,500
6,000	3,000
7,000	3,500
8,000	4,000
9,000	4,500
10,000	5,000
10,001 & over	50% of the improvement cost to a maximum of \$10,000 or \$500 per lineal foot, whichever is the lesser amount.

Maximum Rebate \$10,000

STOREFRONT REBATE PROGRAM PROCEDURES

- Step 1: Initial contact is made with grant recipient. This step will occur with the Agency Staff. The initial contact should determine whether the project is located within the Calexico Downtown Design and Implementation Program area and if the proposed activities are within the program guidelines. The Storefront Rebate Program Guidelines will be reviewed and a copy of the Guidelines, including the application form, will be provided to the potential applicant.
- Step 2: Merchants or property owner fills out application form and sends application to the Agency with a photograph of the storefront (NOTE: If you are interested in obtaining free design services, two copies of the photograph should be submitted); and if the individual applying is not the property owner, documentation proving the individual has the authorization of the property owner to perform the façade renovation work.
- Step 3: Application is reviewed by the Agency Staff/Redevelopment Advisor to determine whether the activities are within the program guidelines.
- Step 4: Preliminary plans (two copies), color samples (five copies), awning designs (if included) and a preliminary budget, should be submitted for review and approval by the Architectural Review Committee and Agency Staff. (NOTE: All information should be submitted together.) An environmental review of the project will occur at this stage. Decisions of the Architectural Review Committee can be appealed to the Agency Board, which shall be the final arbitrator in this program.
- Step 5: Upon approval of the preliminary plans, the applicant should prepare and submit final plans, specifications and detailed cost estimates to the Agency. If the final plans are consistent with the approved preliminary plans, the Agency will review and approve the final plans. The actual grant amount will be contingent upon the actual costs associated with the final plans.
- Step 6: If improvements require building permits, applicants must submit final plans to the Building Department.
- Step 7: The building permit is submitted to the Agency. If revised cost estimates are necessary, these should be submitted along with the building permit to the Agency. Upon submission and approval of these documents, an approval letter indicating the estimated rebate is sent to the applicant. This letter requires the applicant to complete improvements within 180 days from the date of the letter and states that partial completion of the project will void all agreements. If the façade improvement is part of an overall larger rehabilitation, the maximum time requirement will be established accordingly, and documented in this letter. (All change orders must be approved by the Agency).

- Step 8: After completion of the work, the applicant's cancelled checks and bills, copies of the building permits, all contractor's waivers or liens, and a photograph of the storefront improvements should be sent to the Agency. (NOTE: All information should be submitted together.)
- Step 9: Agency staff examines the finished work for compliance with the general design recommendation and any approved change orders.
- Step 10: If the work is in compliance with the guidelines, a rebate check is sent to the applicant within thirty (30) days of Agency receipt of complete documentation.

CALEXICO COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT REBATE PROGRAM TIMELINE

STEPS

WEEKS

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION *															
2	AGENCY REVIEW OF APPLICATION/LETTER REGARDING ITEM ELIGIBILITY.															
3	ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND PREPARATION OF SCHEMATICS															
4	PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATES															
5	DESIGN REVIEW (DRC)															
6	REVIEW BY AGENCY															
7	SUBMISSION OF BUILDING PERMIT															
8	CONSTRUCTION FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS (180 DAY MAXIMUM)															
9	SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTATION TO AGENCY															
10	REIMBURSEMENT BY AGENCY															

*LETTER SENT TO APPLICANT REGARDING ELIGIBILITY.
* LETTER SENT TO APPLICANT REQUESTING SUBMISSION OF BUILDING PERMIT.
* LETTER OF COMMITMENT SENT TO APPLICANT.

* OWNER/TENANT APPLICATION – WITHIN 30 DAYS OF SUBMISSION OF APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION AND APPROVED BY AGENCY STAFF.

* LESSEE APPLICATION – TEN EQUAL PAYMENTS COMMENCING 1 YEAR AFTER SUBMISSION OF APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION AND APPROVED BY AGENCY STAFF.

NOTE: * Steps, 1, 4, 7, 8 and 9 are responsibility of the applicant. Steps 2, 3, 5, 6 and 10 are the responsibility of the Agency. The total review time by the Agency from application to approval is approximately three weeks. Added to the steps required by the applicant, the total time elapsed from application submission to receipt of letter of commitment is six weeks.

**ADDENDUM TO
CALEXICO COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT REBATE IMPROVEMENT
PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

Amendment Date	The following has been approved by the Calexico Community Redevelopment Agency Board
6/8/93	Amendment to require applicants to obtain Unreinforced Masonry clearance from the Building Department in order to be eligible to participate in said program.
9/13/94	Amendment to place a 10 year lien on improved property which would reduce by 10% per year. This lien provision is to guard against the possibility of an applicant applying for assistance and selling the improved property before the 10 year easement deed has expired. (Please read Owner Agreement, Item No. 4, <u>Repayment</u>).
12/13/94	Amendment to allow Lessee to participate in Program by signing an agreement. (Please read Lessee Agreement).
12/13/94	Expansion of the boundaries of the Program which were set in 1987 to match the existing Merged Central Business District and Residential Redevelopment Project Area boundaries through Amendment No. Three. (See Attachment A for a listing-of map of Eligible Areas).
01/14/2003	Reset the boundaries for the Storefront Rebate Program to First Street to Fifth Street and western boundary of Heffernan to the Eastern boundary of Mary) and both sides of Imperial Ave (from first to Highway 98).
04/08/2003	Reset the boundaries for the Storefront Rebate Program to the areas which are located within Calexico Downtown Design and Implementation Program areas map are eligible for assistance under this program. (See Attachment A for map of Eligible Areas.) Guidelines were revised to allow rebates only existing buildings within the eligible area. Amount of Rebate was lowered to a maximum of \$ 10,000.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION EXISTING SIGN ORDINANCE

Calexico has an adopted Sign Ordinance. This Sign Ordinance is contained in the Municipal Code under Building and Construction Title 15. Section 15.28 and 15.30 of the Building Code state the following (in general):

It is unlawful to construct or maintain any sign in the city unless it conforms to the following specifications.

1. Wood or metal sign not more than three (3) feet in width (of a certain color), consisting of not more than two (2) lines, containing only the name and type of business. Such sign may be bolted horizontally and securely to the front or arcade of the building;
2. Standard Chain Store Signs are allowed (e.g. MacDonald's, Jack-in-the-Box, etc.)
3. Painted signs on arcades or buildings are limited to two (2) words describing type of business (conducted on premises); All other painted signs are unlawful;
4. Vertical and Horizontal signs fastened to building or arcade are permitted subject to compliance with eight and extension limitations;
 - a. Sign shall not project more than 48 inches from building
 - b. Sign shall not come within ten feet of sidewalk or street level
 - c. Sign shall be securely fastened to building in accordance with Building Department specifications.